

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-31 are pending. By this Amendment, the drawings, the specification, and claims 1-31 are amended. No new matter is added. Support for the claims can be found throughout the specification, including the original claims, and the drawings. Reconsideration in view of the above amendments and following remarks is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is thanked for the indication that claims 9-13, 21, 25, 27, and 29 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the features of the base claim and any intervening claims, and that claim 31 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, and to include all of the features of the base claim and any intervening claims. Features of dependent claims 9, 21, 25, 27, 29, and 31 have been added to independent claims 1, 16, 24, 26, 28, and 30, respectively. It is respectfully submitted that independent claims 1, 16, 24, 26, 28, and 30, as amended, are in condition for allowance, along with claims 2-8, 17-20 and 22-23, as well as objected to claims 9-13, 21, 25, 27, and 29, which depend, respectively, therefrom.

The Office Action rejected claims 30-31 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite. By this Amendment, the Examiner's comment has been addressed in amending claims 30-31. Accordingly, this rejection should be withdrawn.

The Office Action rejected claims 1-8, 14-20, 22-24, 26, 28, and 30 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kim et al. (hereinafter "Kim"), U.S. Patent Publication No. 2004/0245878, in combination with European Patent No. EP 1094145 (hereinafter "EP '145").

Amendment dated May 2, 2012

Reply to Office Action of February 24, 2012

The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent claims 1, 16, 24, 26, 28, and 30 each recite, *inter alia*, an auxiliary bracket interposed between the stator and the motor mounting bracket. Kim and EP '145, taken alone or in combination, do not disclose or suggest at least such claimed features of independent claims 1, 16, 24, 26, 28, and 30, or the respective claimed combinations.

That is, the Office Action asserted that "Kim [] teach[es] the details of the bearing housing and the details of the connections of the stator to the tub of the washing machine." The Office Action then acknowledged that Kim "[] do[es] not teach a mounting bracket in such connection." The Office Action then asserted that "EP [']145 teaches a bearing housing, a mounting bracket[,] and connections of the stator to the tub as claimed," referring to the entire document, especially Figs. 2b and 9, and the related description of EP '145. The Office Action then concluded that "[i]t would have been obvious to an ordinary artisan at the time the invention was made to incorporate a structure of connections of the stator and the tub, including the inserted molded housing, mounting bracket, known structural details of the bracket, known structural connections of the housing and the stator as well as know[n] positioning and reinforcing structures recited by EP [']145 into the washing machine of Kim [] with reasonable expectation of success in order to use known arrangements for their functions because EP [']145 teaches the referenced arrangements as known in the art of washing machines."

However, EP '145 is directed to a drum type washing machine that includes a tub 2 having a rear wall 200, a drum 3 mounted in the tub 2, a shaft 4 fixed to the drum 3, a bearing

housing 7 fitted to a central portion of the rear wall 200 of the tub 2 and supporting bearings 6a and 6b on an outer circumference of the shaft 4, and a motor 5 having a stator 14 mounted to the rear wall 200 of the tub and a rotor 13 fixed to a center of the shaft 4. EP '145 merely discloses a supporter 17 provided between the rear wall 200 of the tub 2 and the stator 14 of the motor 5 to support the stator 14 and to maintain concentricity of the stator 14. However, EP '145 does not disclose or suggest the claimed feature of an auxiliary bracket interposed between the stator and the motor mounting bracket, as recited in independent claims 1, 16, 24, 26, 28, and 30. It is respectfully submitted that the claimed auxiliary bracket interposed between the stator and the mounting bracket provides increased rigidity between the stator and the mounting bracket. Referring, for example, to the exemplary embodiment shown in Figures 7 and 9 of the present application, auxiliary bracket 260 having a predetermined thickness is interposed between motor mounting bracket 250 and stator 30, forming a space between a rear wall of tub 2 and the stator 30, and increasing a rigidity of the tub 2 in a region where, for example, a connector 37 and a hall sensor 38 may be arranged on the stator 30. See, for example, Figs. 3, 7, and 9, and paragraphs [70]-[71] of the present application.

Accordingly, the rejection of independent claims 1, 16, 24, 26, 28, and 30 over Kim and EP '145 should be withdrawn. Dependent claims 2-8, 17-20, and 22-23, as well as objected to claims 9-13, 21, 25, 27, and 29, are allowable over Kim and EP '145 at least for the reasons discussed above with respect to independent claims 1, 16, 24, 26, and 28, from which they respectively depend, as well as for their added features.

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CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

If the Examiner believes that any additional changes would place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this, concurrent and future replies, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 16-0607 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,
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